

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please substitute the following **claims 1, 7, and 14** for the pending claims 1, 7, and 14:

SW
C1
B1

1. (Twice Amended) A system for reducing congestion in an Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC), the system comprising a network element that comprises:

- a filter receiving event notifications from processes within the network element and providing a plurality of filtered event notifications, wherein each event notification of the plurality of event notifications notifies of a different event;
- an event counter module coupled to the filter for receiving the plurality of filtered event notifications from the filter and counting a quantity of event notifications to produce event counter information; and
- a performance measurement module coupled to the event counter module for receiving the event counter information from the event counter module and sending alarms to the OMC.

SW
C2
B2

7. (Twice Amended) A method for reducing the number of event notifications sent to an Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) by a network element serviced by the OMC, the method comprising the steps of:

- filtering event notifications to provide a plurality of filtered event notifications, wherein each event notification of the plurality of event notifications notifies of a different event;
- counting the plurality of filtered event notifications to generate event count information from the filtered event notifications; and
- emitting an alarm if the event count information exceeds a threshold.

B3 SW
C3

14. (Twice Amended) An apparatus for reducing the number of event notifications sent to an Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC) by a network element serviced by the OMC comprising:

- means for filtering to provide a plurality of filtered event notifications, wherein each event notification of the plurality of event notifications notifies of a different event;